

DIAGEO North America

Celebrating Life, Every Day, Everywhere

GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE –

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 82, AN ACT ALLOWING PACKAGE STORE PERMIT HOLDERS AND BACKERS TO HOLD GIFT BASKET RETAILER PERMITS

February 18, 2014

Good afternoon Representative Baram and Senator Doyle and the other distinguished members of the General Law Committee. My name is Dwayne Kratt. I am the Sr. Director of Government Affairs for the Northeast for Diageo North America. My office is in Norwalk, CT which is also the North American headquarters for Diageo.

The purpose for my testimony is to speak in support of SB 82, An Act Allowing Package Store Permit Holders And Backers To Hold Gift Basket Retailer Permits. However, I am requesting that amendments be made to the legislation to include spirits and beer as items that can be used for gift baskets. My rationale for this request is quite simple. As you may know, at Diageo we are brewers, distillers and vintners of beer, wine and spirits and we believe a gift basket retailer permit should not be limited to just wine. Indeed, each year I personally put together many gift baskets for charitable purposes and the recipients are most appreciative of the beer, wine and spirits I include in those gift baskets.

I recognize that this legislation amends law that was passed a few years ago mainly for the benefit of florists and other gift shops. And at the time, I did not make the same request to have beer and spirits included. However, now that package stores in particular are interested in expanding their business to include gift baskets, I am eager that we afford package stores the opportunity to create gift baskets that include any alcohol beverage that they sell in their store. Quite simply, why should we limit them to just wine?

Thank you for the opportunity to express my support for this legislation and my suggestions to improve upon it to give package stores and consumers more opportunity to sell and purchase creative gift baskets that may include wine, beer and spirits.

About Diageo

Diageo is the world's leading premium drinks business with an outstanding collection of beverage alcohol brands across spirits, beer and wine. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Windsor, Buchanan's and Bushmills whiskies, Smirnoff, Ciroc and Ketel One vodkas, Baileys, Captain Morgan, Tanqueray and Guinness.